

To: Amir Assadi <ahassadi@facstaff.wisc.edu>
From: Louis Sokoloff <louis@shiloh.nimh.nih.gov>
Subject: Re: request for papers and apology for a plan change
Cc:
Bcc:
Attached:

November 8, 1999

Dear Amir;

Sorry to hear about your health problems and that you will not be able to visit us as planned. There are now so many effective pharmacological agents intervening at different levels that I thought that was no longer a major medical problem. I know of a number of people, myself included, in which is completely under control with a variety of drugs. I hope that the same will soon be true with you also.

Your description of your interest and some of your ideas has indicated to me that we do have much to talk about and that we will be able to reschedule your visit soon. December is not a good time for me because I have to be in Germany during the first 2 weeks and then have some commitments after my return. The week of January 9 is entirely open.

Your comments on fMRI are entirely in accord with ours. We share the same reservations. Although our Laboratory pioneered the use of functional brain mapping on the basis of changes in energy metabolism and/or blood flow, we are embarrassed at how the field is being abused by descriptive methods that produce signals the relationship of which to some physiological function is still obscure. I am a firm believer in Lord Kelvin's statement, "If you cannot describe it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meagre and unsatisfactory kind," but currently in the field of functional brain imaging, there appears to be little appreciation of quantitative measurements of defined physiological processes. All they care about is where in the brain they find a colored spot and not why. Maybe this is because the field is now so heavily invaded by psychologists rather than real scientists. In many cases, we still adhere to model development and evaluation, and I believe that we do have things to discuss.

In the meantime, we are sending out today the reprints that you requested. If you are interested in any others, please let us know.

Best regards and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Lou